NOTES FROM THE VOID

The A Void Collective Fanzine

FREE

Issue Two, August 2025

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Joy Disposal Unit
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The New Real
Rozism
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The Lab
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Utopia Development Corporation

....and more!

OUR MANIFESTO

We believe that no one should be excluded from performing their music in public because of their neurotype, disability, age, or inexperience. We believe that someone playing their first gig is as valuable as someone playing their thousandth, and that the age of a performer doesn't have any bearing on how good they are or whether they should be given good gigs.

We understand that some neurotypes and mental health conditions make it harder for musicians to find opportunities, that the way some of us are wired makes networking an impossible task, and that being unable to harass promoters for shows means the gigs don't come.

We understand that some music is deemed too 'weird' to be given good gigs by some promoters, and that's wrong. Just because a musician is making something not classed as 'normal' doesn't mean they should be relegated to the outer edges of open mic nights - they should be on the bills at proper gigs, with their name on the poster.

We are a group of musicians from various bands and with different skills. Some of us are awful at networking, but some of us are amazing at it. Our skills complement one another, and we make decisions on how to proceed collectively. We aim for full inclusivity, to give valuable shows to the people who are ignored by the people who are currently putting on the 'big gigs'.

We stand against ageism, ableism, exclusion of any kind, and favouritism. We stand for the overlooked and marginalised.

We want to make each gig valuable for the acts playing, something that will be more long-lasting for them than just another half hour on a stage. We video wherever we can, get photos taken, and run this zine. We have an etiquette guide that we ask everyone to abide by, a list of things that make the shows stress-free. Once the gig has ended, we can do things for the acts who have performed, whether it's recording them cheaply (or even free), helping with instrument repairs, or enabling them to go and do what we do elsewhere, we try to keep adding value to their experience.

Put simply, we want to be what we think should already exist, and we feel there's a void.

Why It's Time to Ditch Spotify

are you ok with your stolen royalties funding weapons?

Daniel Ek, millionaire founder of monolithic streaming service Spotify, has recently invested €600 million in the German defence technology company Helsing. This is on the back of a previous €100 million investment a few years ago. Helsing is using this money to develop battlefield AI.

Musicians, are you ok with this? Every year we see local bands breathlessly sharing their Spotify stats. Everyday on Instagram someone we know excitedly thanks Spotify for adding them to a playlist that will increase their profile. A couple of years back, Spotify stopped paying a single penny for songs that have fewer than 1000 streams, deeming smaller artists not important enough to bother even giving their (frankly insulting) $0.003 royalty to (that's $3 for 1000 plays btw). 80% of the music on Spotify is below this threshold, but it's ok, because Daniel Ek says making music costs nothing, so we should all be just jolly grateful that he's doing so well and helping us all out!

Now Daniel Ek, who became a millionaire due to paying out such tiny amounts to artists, is using your stolen money to make AI powered weapons, weapons that will kill people.

Look, we all know that streaming is an essential part of the modern world for musicians, but there are dozens of options that don't steal from you and use that stolen money to pay for developing new ways to literally kill people. Even $0.003 of your money going towards researching novel means of murder is entirely too much, yet people you know, perhaps even you, feel it's a price worth paying to get your music out there.

As if Spotify platforming the misogynist and alleged sex-trafficking rapist Andrew Tate wasn't enough, or giving millions of your stolen royalties to Joe Rogan (who helped adjudged rapist Donald Trump become President again) didn't act as the final straw, now you're literally funding research into killing other human beings.

Show courage, cancel your Spotify subscription (there are services that transfer all your playlists to other providers) and pull your music down. In this era of increased worship of 'the Algorithm' and reliance on AI, do something radical and go analogue. It'll be a tiny pin prick on the monster of Spotify, but eventually those pin pricks will become so numerous the beast will fail.

THE LAB

Alex from **ÜLV** sings the praises of Northampton's most idiosyncratic venue

Thee Moths at the Labour Club, 2006

The first time I ever played the Lab, it was called the Labour Club, and I was living in Birmingham. I'd been playing as Thee Moths for several years, and was invited by a guy called Jamie and his pal Chris East (yes, the fantastic local comedian) after releasing a tape on their Undereducated cassette label. It was the summer of 2006, and the long room upstairs was ridiculously hot.

The next time I played was in 2024, with my current band ÜLV, opening for Cheap Bleach and Hogroast, promoted by Howard and Nancy from Picky New Promotions. This time we were downstairs, and despite our passing years, the guitar-based noise rock we make seemed to go down well with the kids who were there for the headliners.

Also, I was now living in Northampton.

When it came time to find a venue for the A Void Collective, the Lab was top of our wish list in Northampton. The ethos of the venue, its community-run spirit, and the friendliness of its staff felt like the perfect match. In the Collective, we're eternally grateful to them for taking a chance on us.

The Lab is an unassuming building sitting on the corner of Charles Street and Earl Street, and you'd be forgiven for thinking it's just another of the terraced houses that line so many roads and streets in our town. But appearances can be deceptive. Inside, there's a large room with a good-sized stage, a bar, and space to stand and watch the bands or sit and drink a cold beer. During the week, they run numerous events, giving back to the community that has patiently accepted the music that regularly pounds from the windows. They also do an amazing Sunday Roast.

There are multiple rooms that groups can hire, catering to whatever size event you might have in mind (so long as that event isn't the kind of thing that needs the space that somewhere like only the Roadmender could provide), and they seem to be always open to ideas and taking on new things. Spend even a couple of hours there and you can see why local legend Alan Moore is on record with his praise for the place.

As a musician, I hope the Lab stays exactly as it is for many years to come, as a member of the Collective, I hope we can do things to help it out financially as those years pass. It's the perfect inclusive venue for

Performing in ÜLV in 2025. Photo by Louis Sefton

us, a place that matches our ethos to the letter.

You can become a member of the Lab at their website, where you'll also find out about upcoming events and regular evenings.

thelabnorthampton.club/

The Show Must Go On

what makes the Shoetown promoters tick?

A Void: What made you decide to put on shows in Northampton?

Picky: We both love live music and spend all of our extra time at gigs and music festivals. But the promotions company began as a drunken 2 am conversation with a friend of ours back in Feb of 2023. He was staying with us after seeing a gig at Craufurd Arms and he suddenly said “You should start a promotions company!” (Mainly because we have a large enough house to host bands). And I thought, “Surely it can't be that easy?” Turns out it is! Don't get me wrong, it's A LOT of work and money, but so rewarding and fun. I feel like I can now contribute to my favourite pastime; not being musical, there was no way I could be in a band, but this is something I can do.

A Void: What’s been your proudest moment to date?

Picky: Proudest moment to date: last Friday, without a doubt. The promotions company is named after the working title of a bdrmm song; their song 'It's Just a Bit of Blood' was called 'Picky New' all of 2020, and the title only changed when their second album came out. They're my absolute favourite band, and all-around great people, so having them play our Second Anniversary show last Friday was a real highlight of my life. And, I have to say, being able to book thistle. a number of times makes me incredibly proud; this is a band that has a very bright future, and the trust they've put in me is wonderful.

A Void: What do you know now that you wish you’d known when you started out?

Picky: Ha, I still feel like we're just starting out! I am trying to learn currently not to overextend myself. I get so excited that people want to play for us, that I want to put everyone on! Bands just want to play, and if I can make that happen, I'm happy.

A Void: What is the goal for Picky? You put a lot of out-of-town bands on, and I’m guessing there’s a plan behind that?

Picky: We've got two goals. First, make Northampton a regular stop for touring bands. There's no reason Northampton should be skipped over for Bedford and Milton Keynes (but that's no shade against them; they've built up a great scene that we very much enjoy and often attend gigs there!) We especially love young touring bands that go on to play some of our favourite small UK festivals, such as Get Together in Sheffield, Dot2Dot in Bristol and Nottingham, Wanderlust in Southampton, Future Now in Birkenhead, Swn in Cardiff, to name a few, and international festivals that are popular with UK bands, such as Left of the Dial in Rotterdam, Supersonic Block Party in Paris.

Secondly, provide an outlet for local bands to play. We love having young bands play their first-ever gigs with us, and we also want to support more established bands in Northampton, giving them opportunities to perform. When local bands play support slots, we hope that they make connections with the touring bands, so that there can be gig swaps in the future!

A Void: You’ve been going for a couple of years now, where do you see Picky in another two years?

Picky: In two years, I hope that we're still doing just this... but maybe with some sort of funding?

https://pickynew.com/

Never Being Boring

We quiz theatrical songwriter **Prim Morrisroe**

A Void: Who is Prim Morrisroe? A character? A mask? You? An idealised form of you?

Prim Morrisroe: I think Prim Morrisroe is kind of all those things in one, whilst it's me at the heart of it, the stage me is more exaggerated, confident, chaotic and still vulnerable. It's the version of me who's allowed to scream what I'm thinking when life feels so heavy. So I wouldn't really say a mask, but more of a mirror that reflects the best parts of myself.

A Void: When did you start making music? What inspires you?

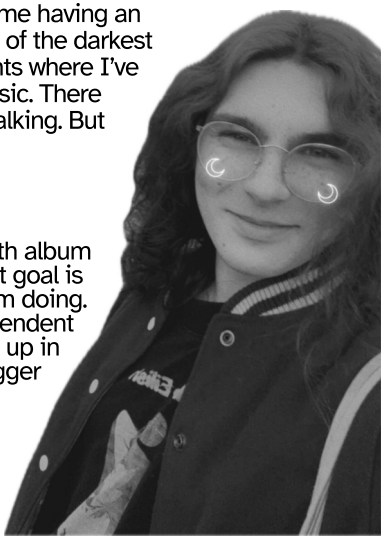
Prim: I started out writing musical theater a couple of years ago, and it never really took off, but it adds so much more context when you listen to what I make now haha.. Just the obsession of being able to tell stories and build characters through songs was such a crazy and fun concept to me, but at some point I got sick of people telling me that it was never good enough to put onto a stage, so I turned to music as a stage for myself. I'm inspired by artists who manage to do the same kind of world building.. Melanie Martinez, AJR, McKenna Grace, Chappel Roan all people who make amazing music whilst all having the quirkiness and brains to build something unique.

A Void: Your music is theatrical, swerving the meat and potato "drabbery" (if that's a word) of a lot of rock music, what would your ideal show look like?

Prim: I love this question so much! My dream show would be filled with video screens, projection walls, props and perfect lighting cues to help convey what goes on in my head constantly just for an hour or two. I try to bring at least some of the ideas I have to the smaller shows I'm playing now though for sure

A Void: Your EP is out soon, tell us everything about it.

Prim: Yeah, it's called The Boring Part and it's basically me having an existential crisis... but make it sparkly. It dives into some of the darkest thoughts I've had over the last year or two, those moments where I've questioned everything about myself and my place in music. There are things on this EP I could never fully express just by talking. But even in the heaviest songs, there's always a little glitter.



A Void: What's next for you?

Prim: I'm definitely planning to start work on a full-length album after a short break from writing, but right now my biggest goal is finding the right people—the ones who really get what I'm doing. Whether that means getting signed or building an independent fanbase big enough to support all the wild ideas I've got up in my head, I'm just focused on making this project feel bigger and braver. I'm not in this to play it safe

https://linktr.ee/PrimMorrisroe

Prim Morrisroe plays the Lab on the 14th of August, and the Black Prince on the 15th.

Correction: in issue one we reported that the Dodo Appreciation Society loved Aerosmith. They have been in touch to correct this. It is in fact only Sam who loves Aerosmith, Neil believes them to be "lame". We are happy to right this wrong.

Big Town Heroes

Appearing fully formed, Headswitcher have gone from nowhere to everywhere in the blink of an eye. We spoke to their guitarist, Oli and frontman Kirk about their meteoric rise.

Headswitcher describe themselves as a 'grunge/ punk/alternative band', but that drastically undersells their mixture of Sub Pop and more mainstream acts like Foo Fighters and Bon Jovi, along with 70s heavy metal and hardcore. Unusually, you can hear the bands they cite as influences, with their two singles, 'Around' and 'Alien', channelling the Foos, Soundgarden, Sabbath, and Nirvana, but the sound they make, while undoubtedly shaped by their influences, is no mere copy of the past.

Forming in the dying days of 2023, Headswitcher came together when Kirk Jolly decided he wanted to put a band together to play the songs he'd been writing. Oli picks up the story, "I had played with Kirk in the past and was jamming in a different project at the time, so that's how I ended up eventually joining. Harry, our drummer, was someone I had played with and wanted to get on board as Kirk and I felt he would fit the bill. Callum, our bassist, joined at the beginning of this year and has also been producing our studio recordings."

None of the members are new to making music in Shoetown, and have even played together previously in Parking on Pavements (with Kirk filling in on drums on one occasion). "Yeah," says Oli, "I have previously been in The Comms, the Kian Russell Band, as well as Parking On Pavements, Harry and Callum go way back to when Parking on Pavements were still called Flake 99! Kirk has played in a myriad of different bands, and it's hard to name them all in one place!"

Headswitcher photographed by Fleur Tosney

This writer has a theory that smaller, out-of-the-way places, ignored by the traditional music press back in the day (and as a result ignored by the record labels), produce incredible music. Just look at the explosion of talent that came out of the deeply uncool Stourbridge in the 80s. Northampton is no different, never cool, but a town that punches above its weight musically.

"I think the fact that there is such a strong music scene here is probably down to the music courses offered by the local colleges and university," says Oli, "I only experienced the latter, although I know Kirk and Callum went to the college. A lot of the bands that have come through in the past, and that are coming through at the moment, came from that music course at the college (The Barratts and Tragic just to name a few). That's of course not the only reason, Northampton does have a perpetuating musical heritage that was ushered in by bands like Bauhaus, Spacemen 3 and Jazz Butcher. Venues like the Black Prince, the Lab and the Garibaldi also act as a consistent and healthy musical hub that has kept the town's music scene alive for a long time now, longer than even I've been a part of the scene! I think it is safe to say there isn't much to appreciate in Northampton outside of the arts (and maybe the shoes), aesthetically and emotionally speaking - it isn't particularly the prettiest town!"

Given the wealth of talent our big town has to offer, who are you listening to locally at the moment?

Oli: "To name a few bands on the scene we're loving, there's Garrotte, who we've played with on a few occasions - a fantastic young metal act, they've got some proper gnarly riffs.

the seemingly unstoppable rise of

HEADSWITCHER

Hogroast are a great young punk band, lots of energy, and they're always a blast to do a gig with. Kirk and I love The Dodo Appreciation Society for how absurd they are. KC Blackwater are another band that comes to mind; they played a killer set at the Lab a few months back."

For anyone watching the local scene, there is no denying that Headswitcher seem to be everywhere right now, having popped up suddenly. One minute they didn't seem to exist, the next they were headlining King of Hearts and Twinfest, as well as grabbing great support slots from SBD and Picky. How did they do it?

"Kirk already had a large repertoire of songs to put into a live set," explains Oli, "so getting a gigable setlist together took a much shorter amount of time compared to having to create a setlist of songs from scratch. Kirk has also been a fairly prolific musician in the local area, so people were curious to see what he was going to do next. As for myself, I've been on the scene for almost a decade and I know a lot of the promoters and bands in the area fairly well, and I've built up something of a local profile - not as much as Kirk of course, he is the songwriting chief!"

The two singles to date, "Around" and "Alien", are unapologetically melodic, with "Around" having an almost Hüsker Dü-ish "New Day Rising" repetition thing going on. Both eschew the recent (and to these ears at least, bizarre) screamo revival, harking back instead to the 90's Seattle/Sub Pop sounds of bands like the Screaming Trees. Was this a conscious decision, or did the sound evolve out of what you'd all been doing before?

Kirk responds, "Musically, we draw a lot of influence from Seattle bands of the 80s and 90s, but it's not a conscious decision to relive that sound and era. A lot of the melodic aspects of our music are heavily influenced by bands such as Bon Jovi and Foo Fighters. As for our previous musical endeavours, we all come from a very punk-rock background. All of these aspects are an inspiration to our sound and style as a band."

With the present looking so bright, it is safe to assume the future is equally exciting, so what's happening next?

"We're readying up to release our debut EP 'Out of Reach' which I imagine will be out by the time this zine is published! On top of that, we're getting back into the studio, and we've got a slew of gigs coming up including Twinfest, Multitude and Live by A5."

Follow Headswitcher on their social media accounts, or go and see them play before they're too big for local venues.

linktr.ee/headswitcheruk

18 months ago **Utopia Development Corporation** were everywhere, with an ep about to drop and t-shirts printed, then... silence

In the first of an occasional series we ask a missing in action Shoetown band -

Where the HELL have you been!?

Guitarist Chris, answers:

Now that is the question isn't it!

The ep definitely is happening, one of the tracks might have had a few too many tracks (like 17@ish) in it. This is what happens when I'm left to my own devices to write vocals, it's created quite a mountain for Rufus to climb. On top of that there was some major plugin issues, so like many things in life the computers are causing as many headaches as they solve, which at least feel on brand.

As for where we've been in the interim our Alex had a baby so he's been changing nappies and the like and I had a Meniscal Allograft Transplantation at the start of the year and am only just getting back to being mobile!

The official line is the mailroom has been really busy...

Next up, we've got the penultimate spot for Twinfest 25 down the Black Prince which will only be our second show of the year, and the first with some slightly limited mobility.

Then we're playing a Picky New show at the Gari on the 1st of August, so that's 2 shows in 2 weeks, so yeah I'd say we're back!

Will be debuting a couple of new tracks (one of which is the white whale that's caused all the issues for the ep!) and the record will, in theory, come out, though I definitely don't want to put a date on that!

utopiadevelopmentcorporation.bandcamp.com/

Feel Mighty Real

Telling stories with **The New Real**

A Void: Who are The New Real?

The New Real: The New Real is Graham on vocals, guitars and drums, Doz on guitar, Andy T on bass guitar and backing vocals and Alfie T on Drums. Three of us played together in Bristol in the early 90s, but life happened with jobs and families, but we stayed in touch with music being our shared passion. Fast forward to 2023, Graham who had drummed, was now singing, playing guitar and writing songs, and so Andy and Doz were drafted in to create The New Real. We realised to play live and jam new material, we would need a drummer and recruited Graham's young nephew, Alfie. The New Real have been playing together since 2023, working on our debut album recorded in Graham's home studio and co-produced by Doz.

A Void: How would you describe yourselves to someone who has never heard you?

TNR: The New Real is a guitar-led alternative rock band with lyrics about what it is to be human, our views on life and the modern world. The band takes its name from the play by David Edgar where facts are an illusion in a post-truth world... a play which we felt mirrored our thoughts.
We always try to create thought-provoking or emotional music that you can listen to on several levels – tune into the guitar and melodies or pull apart the lyrics and see what they mean to you.

A Void: What has your experience of playing live been in recent years?

TNR: Having recorded the album, we're now starting our gigging journey as a live band. We have been playing together regularly for the last two years and performed a set for a few friends, but we want to get out and play. Doz is based in Northampton, walking distance from The Lab and thought it would be a great venue for our debut.

A Void: You recently released "Here and Seeing Everything", what's the response been to the album

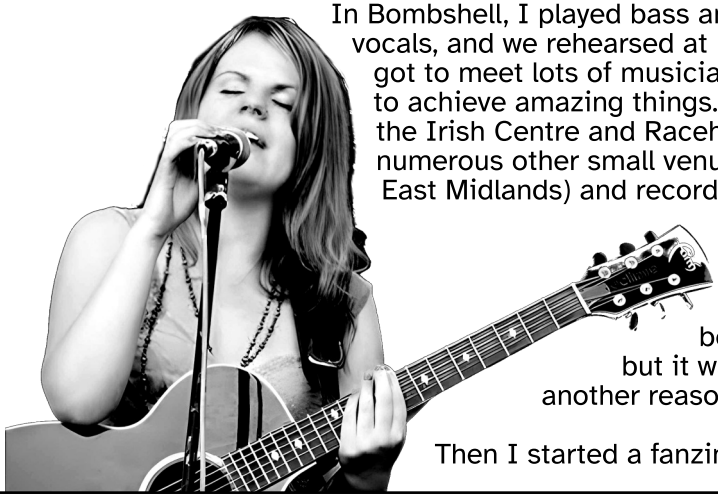
TNR: The response has been very good with positive feedback on the songwriting and sound. Albums appear to be a thing of the past, but we wanted to create a set of songs that flowed, a blend of tempos, emotions... and while we want to create a character sound for The New Real, we also want to provide some variety in that sound – it's a very hard and fine line. People have been very complimentary of the recording and in particular the guitar sounds. Graham and Doz spend a lot of time creating the right guitar sound for each song.
A great aspect of the feedback is that people like to say what their favourite tracks are. It's been interesting that people have chosen different tracks off the album as their favourite so that gives us confidence that we have a few good songs on there.
There is so much music released on modern music streaming platforms and getting noticed is hard – it's like planting a sapling in a forest and saying, "Look at my new tree!" We haven't promoted the album yet, just sharing it with friends and family, but it's getting some streams, and the next stage will be to build some promotional campaigns off the back of playing the songs live.

A Void: What's next for the band?

TNR: We want to get a few gigs done and get a reaction to our performance. We are working on new stuff and have three new songs that are nearly ready for release, so there will be an EP sometime in September. We would love to get to play some small festivals to find a wider audience and see how people react to the music.

the-new-real.bandcamp.com

“I have been involved in the Northampton music scene since I started gigging with my old band Bombshell in 1997 and have made lifelong friends and continue to enjoy being part of such a strong scene.



In Bombshell, I played bass and sang backing vocals, and we rehearsed at Big Noise, where I got to meet lots of musicians who have gone on to achieve amazing things. My band played at the Irish Centre and Racehorse (as well as numerous other small venues across the sunny East Midlands) and recorded five demos at The Lodge. We got asked to do Twinfest but didn’t in the end; maybe it was because I was a child, but it was the 90s, so maybe another reason.

Then I started a fanzine called “Pants” and

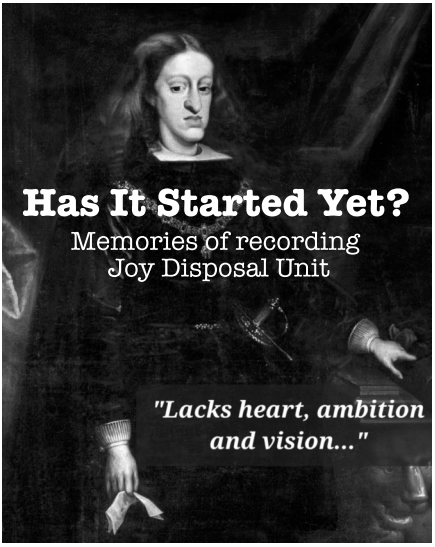
Orchestral Manoeuvres

After being inspired by Longpigs at the Roadmender in 1996, **Rozism** has been part of the local scene for many years. We caught up with her ahead of her Lab show on the 14th of August.

blagged it interviewing bands for a few years, local and national. After finishing my music degree in Leeds, I came home and started doing solo gigs in 2005. I recorded an EP called Sketches in 2007 and got played on 6 Music. Local music legend Kev Lamey started playing bass for me around 2008. I’ve collaborated with a few local musicians over the years, including members of Junior Loaded, Tarantism, the Velvet Engine, the Organised Rhyme Family and Shorty, and sung on a couple of dance records with friends locally and via the late lamented MySpace (RIP). I recently did a gig with In Atoms and consider them one of the local bands around. Of course, the Velvet Engine are amazing, as are Joy Disposal Unit.

I’ve kept the solo gigs going on the side whilst teaching music and playing viola in the Symphonica Orchestra, with whom I’ve got to tour the UK and the world and am forever grateful. I’ve procrastinated taking my solo work seriously for a very long time and need to face my fears and give it go, even if it’s just for myself. I dream of strings, guitars, vocals, beats, textures and songs that will try to make you cry. I would really like to record my music in my studio and get it mastered and released.”

https://www.facebook.com/rozismrozism



Andrew (guitar, Joy Disposal Unit): The EP really has its roots in the earlier recordings we did a year and a half ago. At the time we had zero social media presence and were told/warned by a local promoter that this was a pretty bold move in 2023. Heeding his advice we dragged ourselves into the 21st century and put together a 3 track EP of very scratchy, lo-fi recordings. Fast forward to a year later we became good friends with Alex from ULV who offered to help us record an album. We naturally jumped at the chance, although it must be known that we are musically illiterate and communicate with each other via the gift of onomatopoeia: "Make it more boomy/buzzy/bitey" etc. Unhelpful, but luckily Alex has a good ear and a massive collection of effects pedals, so he understood. The drums were recorded in our cellar/rehearsal space, and the rest over several days at Alex's using amp sims. We recorded an entire album's worth of stuff, but over the weeks following its completion, we argued and pulled it apart. It's not Alex's fault; it's just the way we are. By the time we were finished, we were left with the EP as it is now. These are probably the songs we were most satisfied with and plan to return to the others at a later date. Who says you can't record the same songs over and over again until you're happy? This may sound like folly, but it's nothing new to us; we've been cooking in a musical slow oven for the last 25 years, and we're finally ready - overdone, falling apart and likely to give you food poisoning. Bon appétit!

Andrew, recording in Upton

Alex (recorder): My clearest memory of recording the EP is all 5 of us piling into my car one evening and driving to Daventry and back while listening to the completed songs. We recorded, I think, 11 in total, with 6 making it to the EP. The others were great, except 'Bastard Soirée', which we simply couldn't make work. I spent more time trying to mix that one song than the entire rest put together, and could never get it to sit right. The rest I was very happy with, and liked it so much that I used ElasticStage to make a sneaky bootleg of the whole album on vinyl, just for myself. I learned a lot while recording JDU, including from conversations with Lewis from thistle. who reminded me to go back to trusting my ears instead of following 'proper mix' instructions online. A lot of what I learned on the JDU release made its way onto the next ULV album.

Seamark recording drums in the cellar, with the Glyn Johns 3 mic technique

Song notes:
Alexander

Simon (vocals and guitar): This is a bit more rocky than we usually do. It's got a mispent youth theme, with only deplorable influences to draw upon. To be clear, though, it's not a daddy issues song. My dad's called Derek and he's alright.
Andrew: I know him and he is. The noise section at the end is great, up there with the best of them. That's Alex from ULV playing guest guitar.

Guide tracks being recorded alongside the drums, in the cellar

Danse Troupe Apocalypse

Simon: A doomy surf song about merrily waltzing head first into the apocalypse without a care in the world. Has a nice wild west style guitar in the middle.
Andrew: I did once get mistaken for Hank Marvin...

The Docker

Simon: Gloomy sleazefest about some awful bastard.
Andrew: Yeah, a murderous dock hand. Definitely a keeper.

Wayne, in Upton

Something Deplorable

Simon: This song is very old. I think I was listening to a lot of Suede at the time. Probably the most poppy thing we do.

Andrew: Another one with a creeping guitar line, our love letter to Magazine.

We are Predators

Simon: It's not about the film sadly. It's just a chuggy bugger about loads of wankers.

Andrew: We probably should've called the EP '6 Songs About Unpleasant Bastards'. Usually abbreviated to W.A.P on the setlists. We love to disappoint.

Len Without Legacy

Simon: Andrew thinks this is about that band Len, who sang 'Steal My Sunshine' and how no one remembers them. I'm more than comfortable going with this. Len is not a person, more a frame of mind. Although some people definitely have some Len in them, others are totally Len. You're best off being 100% Len proof. Lenless. Sans Len.

You can hear the "Len Without Legacy" EP at https://joydisposalunit.bandcamp.com/

What others think...

Pulse-Alternative Magazine
14 April ·

Len Without Legacy (EP)
Those familiar with Northampton's vibrant and diverse music scene will recognise the name Joy Disposal Unit as this quartet have livened up many an evening with their quirky sound. With their latest EP, Len Without Legacy, just released it looks as if the rest of the nation will cotton on to their dark delights. Featuring five tracks that are decidedly post-punk/indie/noise flavoured, Len Without Legacy finds the band writing their future in bold strokes.
Typical of the band's modus operandi, there's no fancy introductions or preambles, just a crash of chords, caustic vocals and a drum kit tumbling down the stairs. The band arrive with zero fanfare, and they are all the more powerful for it. Simultaneously tuneful and discordant, there's something strangely alluring about the first track 'Alexander'. It's a neat tension of opposites that finds a brittle, unbreakable beat married to that melodic, contrary sound and are somehow melded into a cohesive whole which makes 'Alexander' (and the whole EP) such a winner. I don't know what kind of alchemy the band are employing but if there was a way they could bottle it and sell it, I'm sure they'd make a fortune. Some of the credit must go to Alex Botten who recorded this EP for the band and he has employed the full dynamic range and listening to 'Alexander' is not unlike being pulled apart by horses (I imagine) with the divergent sound wrestling at the outer reaches of the speakers.
Joy Disposal Unit come armed with a bunch of songs that are tuneful and catchy in the way that post-punk often is. Think The Fall and I, Ludicrous at their most effervescent and you'd have something approaching the sound of these Northamptonians. Largely forsaking solos in favour of a riff heavy assault, Len Without Legacy is punchy and pugnacious and post-punk in it's original definition: while they haven't torn up the past completely, it's hard to hear any influences on 'Something Deplorable'. It's rootless and cosmopolitan and original in a way that much modern music isn't. Featuring half a dozen tracks that each have their own identity, this EP never stops in one place for long with the swirling title-track sitting next to sinister closer 'The Docker' quite effortlessly.
After releasing two nifty EP's it feels like it's time for the band to step up to the next level and produce an album and on the strength of Len Without Legacy, they're more than ready.

REVIEWS

We have a listen to some new releases from Shoetown acts

SINGLES

Rosemary "Saccharine"

The debut single from Harvey Yates' (for now) solo project Rosemary sees a nervy vocal line, refreshingly free of any autotune, sitting atop a slow burner of a song. There's notes of The Cure in here, as well as some of the jangle-pop of the 80s. John Peel would have probably played this at the wrong speed and declared it a goth masterpiece before realising his rpm error.
instagram.com/rosemarybanduk/

thistle. "It's Nice to See You, Stranger"
(Venn Records)

thistle.'s debut EP (if you don't count their previous debut EP, "Lomochrome") wears their 90's noiserock influences on their sleeves, with elements of Swervedriver, Dinosaur Jr, and My Bloody Valentine fighting for space in their short but oddly lazily (in a good, slacker, way) sprawling songs. With production (by multi-talented drummer, Lewis) so thickly fuzzy you could practically chew it, "It's Nice to See You, Stranger" makes it obvious why thistle. are getting so much positive press.
thistlethistlethistle.bandcamp.com/

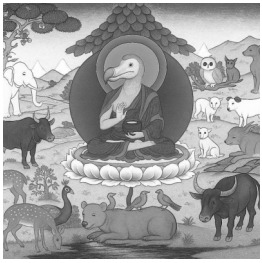
Beings "Fists & Feet"

Back after a slight line-up change, Beings continue their unblemished run of catchy-as-fuck singles. A Void first saw them supporting Utopia Development Corporation at the Gari a couple of years ago and listening to their most recent single shows why they headlined the Roadmender as part of Twinfest this year. Where so many bands are apparently terrified of letting a song get bigger and bigger, Beings say "fuck it" and blast out 5 minutes of existential angst that would be right at home on the main stage at Glastonbury with a hundred Tarquin's waiving their flags in front of the BBC cameras, before coverage cuts back to Mark Radcliffe sitting on some astroturf and saying "That was a bit good, wasn't it? Beings, there, from Northampton I think".
beingsband.bandcamp.com/

Headswitcher "Alien"

The second single from Headswitcher is the kind of earworm grunge-metal Foo Fighters once excelled at (before they became stadium bores and occasional HIV deniers). Your writer is old enough to remember when Kurt Cobain killed himself (almost having spent the, ridiculously expensive at the time £15 to get tickets to Nirvana's cancelled Aston Villa Leisure Centre show because Sebadoh were supporting) so hearing these sounds again so many years later reminds him that nothing ever really goes away, merely bides it's time for enough people to have forgotten it before roaring back out of our speakers. As stated elsewhere in this issue, Headswitcher are going to be huge, so get in now if expertly crafted Sub Pop-esque sounds are your thing.
instagram.com/headswitcheruk/

ALBUM



The Dodo Appreciation Society "Animal Frequencies"

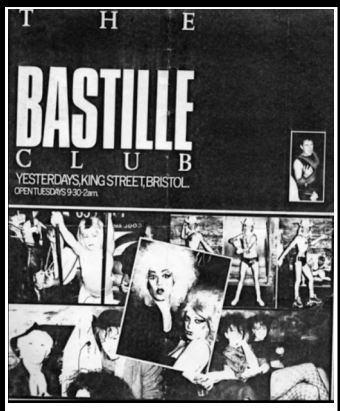
The Dodo's debut album, "Animal Frequencies", follows a string of superb EPs and singles. With a brevity that makes The Ramones look like Mogwai at their most self-indulgent, 11 songs flash by in less than 20 minutes, with 'Kitten Kisses and Puppy Dog Tails" so short that it probably won't ever register a single play on Spotify's broken system. The songs are the typical mix of surrealist humour, scatalogical childishness, and heartfelt moments we've come to expect from drummer Sam and vocalist/guitarist Neil.
In an album made exclusively of highlights, it's hard to pick any out, but "Fish", "The Sex Life of a Slug", "Octopus" and "Mathematical Fly Ant" are especially great. Mostly, the band sticks to the tightly played almost-metal you'll be familiar with from their live shows, but with "Shrimp", they take a brief detour into Syd Barrett-style whimsy as Sam sings a sweet acoustic number about how important shrimps are for the cleanliness of the ocean floor and "Wasp in the Bedroom" presents a possibly Buddhist view of the sanctity of life, with its "Don't Kill It!" refrain.
While so many bands these days feel that they must stick to the algorithm-dictated 'one song every six months' release schedule, it's refreshing to encounter a band as prolific as the Dodos, and a joy to realise there will probably be an EP of brand new tracks along before we can blink.

thedodoappreciationsociety1.bandcamp.com

Bela Lugosi's Alive & Well?

Maevis Moon recounts how a Bristol Goth club made her re-evaluate her hometown

I grew up in rural Northants and I was oblivious to the scene in Northampton in the mid-eighties, not having the means to get in and out of town after dark. It took moving to Bristol to be a student, in 1985 to realise what had been brewing on my doorstep. The Indie/Goth scene in the city was fantastic and it opened my eyes & ears to alternative music & tribes. My favourite night out was the Bastille Club, a dark & dingy basement in Bristol city centre, full of fabulous, furry creatures. My colourful clothing would have been somewhat embarrassing, but I brazened it out with the help of scrumpy (another useful, Bristol discovery). I was keen to get with the scene, but Goth was problematic in that it involved make-up and looking quite smart in a monochrome kind of way. Luckily in the West Country there was another tribe; Crusties. They looked as scruffy as hell and drank lots of scrumpy and were pretty lawless. I took a middle road between Crusty & Goth. Second hand black overcoat (several sizes too big), crimped hair and a lairy attitude.



Bastille Club Flyer

But let's cut to the real driving force of the scene – the playlist. I discovered so many great bands at The Bastille club night. The Cure, Joy Division, Siouxsie & The Banshees, Sisters Of Mercy, Echo & The Bunnymen... But I remember two songs that were guaranteed to get me on the dance floor. First up, The Cult ~ 'She Sells Sanctuary': Billy Duffy's iconic, instantly recognisable guitar riff, in glorious isolation, distorted & weird, slow & meandering to begin with. Then speeded up & exploding into life with Ian Astbury's strangled-sounding vocals.

And then Bauhaus ~ 'Bela Lugosi's Dead': an extraordinary track, the Gothest song ever? I have heard the theory that this track alone was the catalyst for the Goth music movement; that otherwise we might've stayed as a downbeat sub-section of Indie? Who knows? What is for certain though, is that the subject matter, referencing the legendary Hungarian film actor, who played Dracula, is what makes it so very Gothy. Vampires, death, coffins, full of suspense, with a percussive, theatrical build up, evocative of metallic spiders scuttling through echoey stone caverns. The extended version is nearly 10 minutes long; it is 2 minutes before the guitar breaks out - Daniel Ash's urgent, edgy, driven guitar riff. And then Pete Murphy's sparse vocals appear, sounding tortured & fraught before becoming a lament for the late Bela Lugosi. And the most extraordinary thing about this song, as far as I was concerned? It came from Northampton! I could not believe it; my hometown, that I had been so happy to leave behind, was the source of this Goth masterpiece! How is that possible?! (To be fair, Bauhaus got the hell out of there as soon as they could also)

Now, coming full-circle, I am back in my old neighbourhood, and in a band myself, a folk combo ~ Maevis Darkhorse. We do a cover of 'Bela Lugosi's Dead'.
"Why on earth would you do that?!" I hear you cry! I suppose it's about celebrating the culture of my youth and honouring the greatest band that came out of Northampton. And because it's a funny, absurd thing to do.
"How is 'Bela Lugosi's Dead' relevant to folk music??" Well it's all about death isn't it? Lamenting & purging the misery of existence through music; catharsis pure & simple.
"How do you make the leap, with simple acoustic instruments, to the theatrical soundscape that Bauhaus achieved?" Get yourself to a Maevis Darkhorse gig and you will find out! (Hint: the musical saw is very atmospheric...spooky even)

Bollocks at the Back

The Chroni

Thursday 17th July 2025

Reform Seek "Return to 70s

The latest in a series of controversial changes at West Northants Council since their election win, Reform have launched an unusual recruitment campaign. Council Leader Mack Nutter said "We were elected on a mandate to return our followers to the glorious days of the 70s, and that's where we're going - the 1670s". Reform are looking to recruit a Witchfinder General to bolster their ranks. "Ideally, we're looking for someone who can root out any troublemakers before disobedience spreads. Someone with the right mixture of misogynism, a healthy disregard for inclusivity, and probably a working knowledge of the Malleus Maleficarium". Prospective candidates should send their CV directly to Mr. Nutter at Angel Square, unless they're already employed by Reform in which case the ancient law of Cronyism shall apply.

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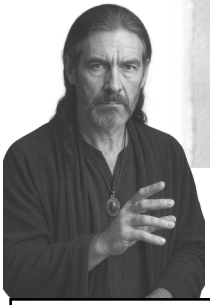


A Void Disaster with our Monthly Horoscopes by Terry Kinesis

Aries (March 21- Apr 20) The Great God Pan is displeased by your choice of footwear. Only a pair of yellow crocs will assuage his anger.

Taurus (Apr 21- May 21) Ozzy is gone and the resurrection of Dio is nigh. Hold fast to your beliefs and deny false prophets.

Gemini (May 22 – June 21) Nine trumpets sound and the mono-browed, warring siblings slouch towards the Roadmender to be reborn. Gather your friends, form a picket line and chant "PARKLIFE!"

Cancer (June 22 – July 22) The Omnipotent Red Crowned Deity thinks you durst defy his immortal throne. Keep on rollin', baby!

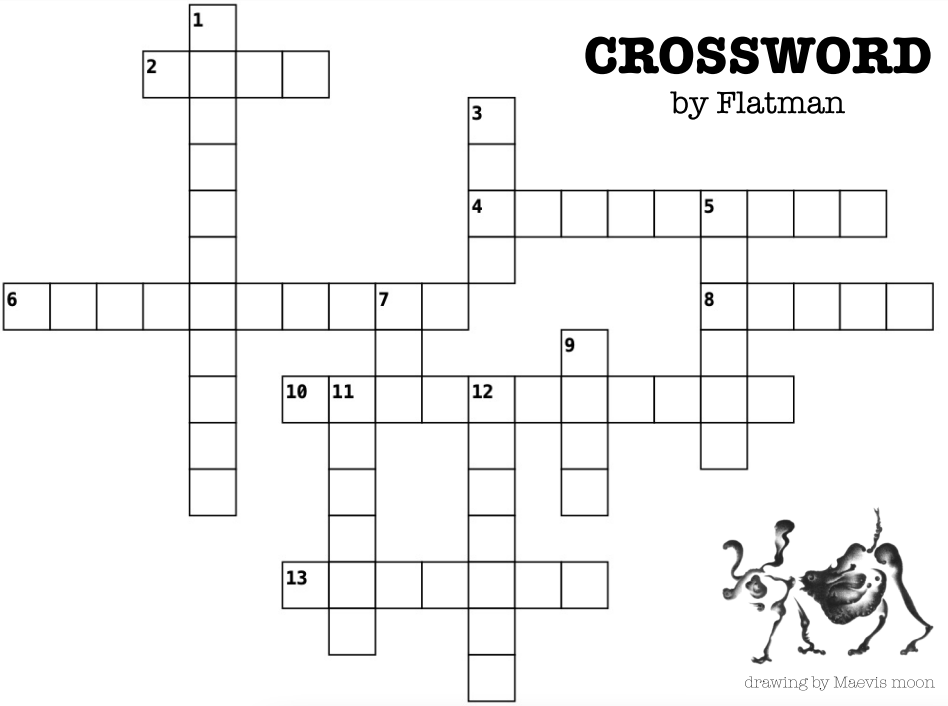
Leo (July 23 – Aug 22) Stringfellow is rising, and with him a host of bad haircuts and tacky nightclubs. Be moderate in your lifestyle choices to avoid calamity.

Virgo (Aug 23 – Sept 22) The one-eyed Yellow god is insulted by your happy-go-lucky nature and love of all things Coldplay. Rethink your life choices.

Libra (Sept 23 – Oct 22) An ancient accord is struck, and the thrice-cursed Collins is planning a comeback. Only by rounding up and

CROSSWORD

by Flatman



drawing by Maevis moon

Across

2. Reef LP shone somewhat (4)

4. Andrew WK really likes to do this (5,4)

6. Hucknall seeks pleasure here (10)

8. Surname of Suede Bassist and host of House of Games (5)

10. Lou Reed's LP dedicated to Optimus Prime (11)

13. Terrorvision's favourite drink (7)

Down

1. Do you realise Wayne Coyne is the singer of this band? (7,4)

3. The Yeah Yeah Yeah's cartographical classic (4)

5. Franz Ferdinand new tune is very addictive (6)

7. Group that composed Straight Outta Compton (1,1,1)

9. Spandau Ballet's preferred chemical element (4)

11. New Order's remorseful song (6)

12. Lewis Capaldi song did not die! (7)

burning 666 mint or near mint copies of Susudio can the apocalypse be averted.

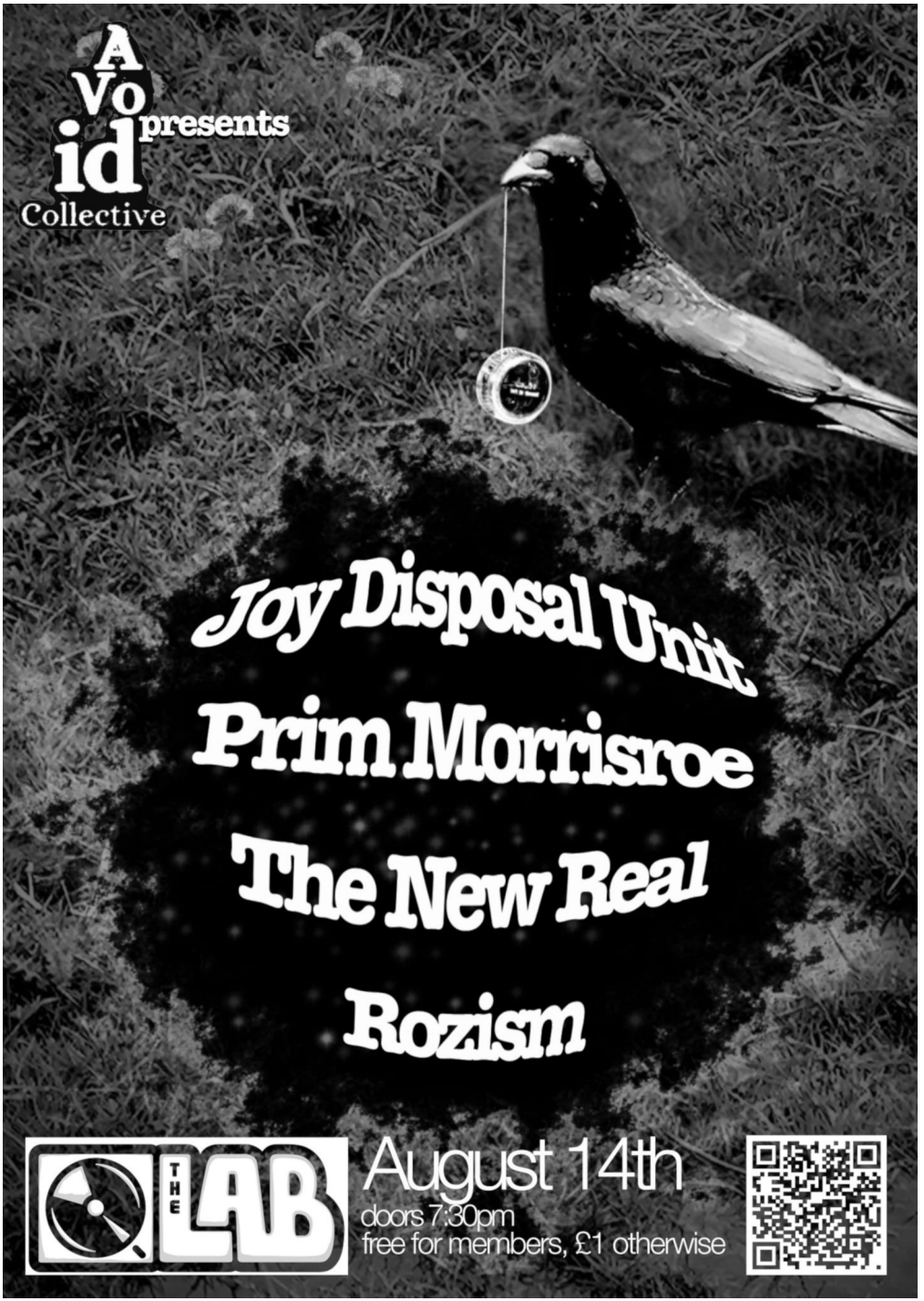
Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21) November has spawned a monster and right-wing thoughts creep into your mind. A trip to Islington will cure you of an obsession with flags and potholes.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21) A plague of tribute acts and cover bands haunt your daily thoughts and are the trouble of your sleep. It's time to be original and stop stealing from others.

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 20) The ancient Mesopotamian demigod, Gilgamesh thinks that your band is lame, and about as metal as Ghost. He's probably right.

Aquarius (Jan 21 – Feb 19) The stars have aligned and Manilow is surfacing from his pelagic tomb. Only Kylie and Jason can save you now. "Especially for You". 25 times. On repeat.

Pisces (Feb 20 – March 20) Lately you have been distracted by visions of Flying V and double-necked guitars. These are instruments of the trickster, Loki, designed to make us look foolish. Buy a Jazzmaster instead.



Want to play one of our shows? Drop us a line at https://linktr.ee/avoidcollective